

§ 2.1

Subpart C—Consent Order Procedure

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AUTHORITY: 15 U.S.C. 46, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Inquiries; Investigations; Compulsory Processes

§ 2.1 How initiated.

Commission investigations and inquiries may be originated upon the request of the President, Congress, governmental agencies, or the Attorney General; upon referrals by the courts; upon complaint by members of the public; or by the Commission upon its own initiative. The Commission has delegated to the Director, Deputy Directors, and Assistant Directors of the Bureau of Competition, the Director, Deputy Directors, and Associate Directors of the Bureau of Consumer Protection and, the Regional Directors and Assistant Regional Directors of the Commission's regional offices, without power of redelegation, limited authority to initiate investigations. The Director of the Bureau of Competition has also been delegated, without power of redelegation, authority to open investigations in response to requests pursuant to an agreement under the International Antitrust Enforcement Assistance Act, 15 U.S.C. 6201 *et seq.*, if the requests do not ask the Commission to use process. Before responding to such a request, the Bureau Director shall transmit the proposed response to the Secretary and the Secretary shall notify the Commission of the proposed response. If no Commissioner objects within three days following the Commission's receipt of such notification,

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the Secretary shall inform the Bureau Director that he or she may proceed.

[48 FR 41374, Sept. 15, 1983, as amended at 50 FR 53304, Dec. 31, 1985; 65 FR 67259, Nov. 9, 2000]

§ 2.2 Complaint or request for Commission action.

(a) A complaint or request for Commission action may be submitted via the Commission's web-based complaint site (<https://www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/>); by a telephone call to 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); or by a signed statement setting forth the alleged violation of law with such supporting information as is available, and the name and address of the person or persons complained of, filed with the Office of the Secretary in conformity with § 4.2(d) of this chapter. No forms or formal procedures are required.

(b) The person making the complaint or request is not regarded as a party to any proceeding that might result from the investigation.

(c) Where the complainant's identity is not otherwise made public, the Commission's policy is not to publish or divulge the name of a complainant except as authorized by law or by the Commission's rules. Complaints or requests submitted to the Commission may, however, be lodged in a database and made available to federal, state, local, and foreign law enforcement agencies that commit to maintain the privacy and security of the information provided. Further, where a complaint is by a consumer or consumer representative concerning a specific consumer product or service, the Commission in the course of a referral of the complaint or request, or in furtherance of an investigation, may disclose the identity of the complainant. In referring any such consumer complaint, the Commission specifically retains its right to take such action as it deems appropriate in the public interest and under any of the statutes it administers.

[77 FR 59305, Sept. 27, 2012]

§ 2.3 Policy as to private controversies.

The Commission acts only in the public interest and does not initiate an